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IN art matters New York has been especially active during the past month, an activity that has been of more practical public benefit than any other since the foundation of our city, for while there have been noticeable incidents of wealthy buyers securing all the art they could purchase and holding to it, there have been other and gratifying instances of equally wealthy men making their purchases for the advantage of the city in which they live. It has taken years for the value of an art collection open to the public, to impress itself upon those who are pecuniarily or otherwise able to aid its establishment. Spasmodically our one Art Museum has been favored with more or less worthless contributions, generally material difficult to accommodate in a private dwelling, until it possessed a medley of pictures of no use as examples and having very few qualities in them even to attract ordinary attention. It appeared as though a "starter" was required, some one who might have the temerity to acknowledge himself sufficiently an American and sufficiently inspired by public spirit to recognize the existence of an incipient American picture collection, and add to it from his own personal means and his own personal acquisitions.

Of a sudden there was an influx of thoughtfulness and liberality, Mr. Vanderbilt's munificence in presenting the "Horse Fair" to the city was the beginner, followed soon by the splendid gift from Miss Catharine Wolfe, and almost at the same moment by that of Mr. Seney.

What a contrast between the disposition of two great collections the public has been able to study within the past few weeks! One that went to an auction, and its pieces distributed to all parts of the country, bought for the gratification of personal taste and destined to a future locked in the gallery of a private dwelling, excluded from the eyes of those who might study it and profit by it, until the failure or absconding of the purchaser puts it again on the market. The other kept intact and placed where the advantages of its possession can be enjoyed by every resident of the city. Such is the difference between Mr. Stewart and Miss Wolfe, one free with protestations of good intentions, liberal in his half-made promises, and conscious that the people generally accepted those rumored promises as evidences of his own wishes. The fate of his collec-

tion is a fitting completion to all his life works and the city and world can safely claim that it is in no sense richer from his ever having lived in it.

By the provisions of Miss Wolfe's will her pictures, with \$200,000 in cash, go to the Metropolitan Museum, the finest and most important gift yet made to it. Among the well known pictures in Miss Wolfe's galleries were: Gerome's "Prayer in the Morgue," Detaille's "Guard of Honor Charging the Fleeing Cossacks," Rosa Bonheur's "Weaning the Calves," Munkacsy's "Mont de Pieté," "Corot's "Ville d'Avray," Max's celebrated painting "The Christian Martyr," Meissonier's "Horsemen," "Palace Reale, Venice," by M. Rico; "Flowers and Fruits," by Preyer; "Turkish Dancing Girl," by Cabanel; "Cattle Group," by Troyon; "Arab Horseman," by Fromentin; "Head of a Young Girl," by G. Jacques; "Monk Playing a Violin," by Tony Robert Fleury; "Abandoned," by Schreyer; "St. Marco, Venice," by Ziem; "The Album," by R. de Madrazo; "The Proposal," by Meyer Von Bremen; "The Holy Family," by Knaus; a Portrait of herself by Cabanel; "The Sick Minstrel Boy," by Louis Gallait; "Brother and Sister," by Bouguereau, and a fine collection of specimens of Von Bremen, Jules Breton, Domingo and others equally well known.

THEN came the gift of \$40,000 in paintings from Mr. George J. Seney, by which some other noticeable pictures were acquired. Mr. Seney's liberality has in the past done much for the advancement of Brooklyn, his public spirit and generous manner of treating every request made to him looking toward the furtherance of culture and comfort in that city, made him one of the most prominent men of that place, and New York, in this one gift alone, has much to thank him for and much to rejoice in. The paintings are as follows: "Henri Le Rolle, "Organ Rehearsal;" Josef Israels, "Expectation;" Josef Israels, "Bashful Suitor;" Julian Dupre, "The Balloon;" V. Baixeras, "Boatmen at Barcelona;" A. Mauve, "Spring;" A. Mauve, "Autumn;" Carl Marr, "Mystery of Life;" George Inness, "Autumn Oaks;" F. D. Millet, "A Cosy Corner;" A. H. Wyant, "County Kerry;" C. H. Davis, "Evening." The two paintings by Israels are valued at \$10,000 each. In addition to this Mr. Seney's paintings, to the number of 195, were recently loaned by him for the purpose and exhibited by the Brooklyn Art Association for the benefit of the building fund of the Brooklyn Home for Aged Men.

WITHOUT having the pleasant features of the cases just recited, the sale of paintings belonging to Mr. Henry Probasco took place on April 18. Among these were some of the best examples of the artists shown, and the prices were therefore gratifyingly high, the 102 paintings selling for \$168,740.

IN connection with this it might be said that Mr. S. B. Chittenden, of Brooklyn, has donated \$100,000 to Yale College to erect a suitable building for the accommodation of its library of 180,000 volumes.

THE new decorations in the Eden Musée are a great improvement upon those formerly in place there; the rather cumbrous centre piece has been removed and a variety of changes made, all of them with a tendency toward the beautiful.

THE Ninth Exhibition of the Society of American Artists is now open at Yandell's Gallery, corner Nineteenth Street and Fifth Avenue, New York.